

PENDING CLAIMS

1. A method of isolating nucleic acid from a sample, said method comprising (a) contacting said sample with a detergent and a solid support in the absence of any chaotropic agent, the solid support comprising an organic polymer, whereby soluble nucleic acid in said sample is bound to the support in the presence of the detergent and absence of any chaotropic agent, and (b) separating said support with bound nucleic acid from the sample.
2. A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the nucleic acid is RNA.
3. A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the nucleic acid is DNA.
4. A method as claimed in claim 1, further comprising an additional step to isolate RNA from the sample.
5. A method as claimed in claim 1, further comprising disrupting or lysing structural components or cells in the sample prior to the contacting step.
6. A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the detergent is anionic.
7. A method as claimed in claim 6, wherein the detergent is sodium dodecyl sulphate, or another alkali metal alkylsulphate salt, or sarkosyl.
8. A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the concentration of detergent is 0.2 to 30% (w/v).
9. A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the detergent is contained in a composition additionally comprising one or more monovalent cations, chelating agents or reducing agents.
10. A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the detergent is used in alkaline solution.

11. A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the solid support is particulate.
12. A method as claimed in claim 11, wherein the solid support comprises magnetic beads.
13. A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the solid support has a hydrophobic surface.
14. A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the nucleic acid is eluted from the support, following separation from the sample.
15. A method as claimed in claim 14, wherein the nucleic acid is eluted by heating.
16. A kit for isolating nucleic acid from a sample, comprising a solid support and one or more detergents as defined in claim 1.
17. A kit as claimed in claim 16, further comprising one or more buffers, salts, lysis agents, chelating agents and/or reducing agents.
18. A kit as claimed in claim 16, further comprising means for isolating RNA.
19. A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the organic polymer is polyurethane.
20. A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the organic polymer is polystyrene.
21. A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the organic polymer is latex.
22. A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the solid support comprises superparamagnetic polystyrene beads.

23. A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the solid support is porous.
24. A method as claimed in claim 1, the method further comprising the step of detecting, hybridizing, amplifying or quantifying the bound nucleic acid after the separating step.
25. The method of claim 5, wherein the disrupting step is effected by one or more of grinding, heating, or alkaline lysis, of the sample.
26. A method of isolating nucleic acid from a sample, said method comprising (a) contacting said sample with a detergent and a solid support in the absence of any chaotropic agent, the solid support comprising an organic polymer, whereby soluble nucleic acid in said sample is bound to the support in a sequence-independent manner in the presence of the detergent and absence of any chaotropic agent, and (b) separating said support with bound nucleic acid from the sample.